



A New Year's Message from:

**Dr. Margaret Adams, Director of Reading and Title I, Malden Public Schools**

### **Start the New Year with Family Traditions**

A new year usually means a list of personal and professional goals. This year, consider starting the New Year with family traditions or habits that will promote your children's learning.

**Read with your child every night for thirty minutes.** Spend thirty minutes reading every night as a family. Share a book together. Read aloud to your child. Have your child read to you. Take turns reading. Have your child read a page to you and then you read the next page. Ultimately, the more children read the better they will do overall in school.



**Start a once a week family game night.** On this night, play board games as a family. Most board games require reading and some math. The games will promote lots of talk, which is the foundation of all learning. Your children will learn important social skills as they learn turn taking, respect for rules, never giving up, and ultimately how to win and lose with dignity.

**Sit and have dinner with your child.** Children and teens, who are part of families who have dinner together, have better academic performance, are better adjusted, and have better nutrition. Dinner talk also promotes increased family communication.



**Talk to your children.** Ask your children about their day. Try questions like, "What was the funniest thing that happened to you today?" Start off by telling them about your day to get the conversation going. The more children talk the better they will do in school since talk promotes learning.

**Make once a week a night with no electronic devices.** Turn off the TV, radio, iPods, computers, etc. As families have more and more electronic devices in our home, we have less time to interact with each other. Children are spending more and more time watching television. Television can lead to poor nutrition, aggressive behavior, and poorer performance in school. Make it a goal to limit your child's screen time to no more than 2 hours each day on every other day of the week.



**Cook with your children once a week.** Invite your children into the kitchen to help prepare the meal. Cooking itself is an important life skill but also involves lots of reading and math. Children also learn how to follow directions. If your child is reading, invite them to read the recipes or find just the right recipe for the meal.

Have a wonderful new year full of time for family and learning. Through all of these simple new traditions, your children will learn the most important lesson there is, that they are loved.

### **Malden Reads: One City, One Book Program**

Parents: Watch for information for the inaugural Malden Reads: One City, One Book program, follow this city-wide program at website [maldenreads.com](http://maldenreads.com)

### **Monthly Literacy Calendars**

Every month grades K-4 students, have received a literacy calendar. The calendars are meant to be used by parents and caregivers to explore ways of adding literacy activities into the home. Do some or as many of the activities that fit your family.

We'd love feedback on the literacy calendars. Please send feedback to [pfish@malden.mec.edu](mailto:pfish@malden.mec.edu).

If you missed a calendar, you can find them on this page of our wikispace,  
<http://maldenfamilies.wikispaces.com/HelpingYourChildatHome>